

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 104088 TOSEC 110398

63

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 104088 TOSEC 110398

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UR, US, XF, PFOR

SUBJECT: SOVIET GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: STATE 103195 TOSEC 110307

1. FOLLOWING IS INR ANALYSIS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST OF APRIL 28, CONCURRED IN BY NEA AND SOV.

2. BEGIN SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS. THE USSR'S APRIL 28 OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST REAFFIRMED MOSCOW'S CALL FOR RECONVENING THE GENEVA MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE AND SHARPLY UPBRAIDED THE US AND ISRAEL FOR DELAYING ITS RESUMPTION. AT THE SAME TIME, IN AN APPARENT EFFORT TO SUGGEST GREATER FLEXIBILITY, MOSCOW REVISED PREVIOUSLY STATED PUBLIC POSITIONS ON THE CONFERENCE BY:

(A)--PROPOSING THAT THE MEPC BE ORGANIZED IN TWO STAGES;
AND

(B)--INDICATING SEEMING NEGOTIABILITY OF THE TIMING AND FORM OF PLO REPRESENTATION.

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IT ALSO ADVOCATED OFFICIALLY--IN LINE WITH BREZHNEV'S

STATEMENT ON FEBRUARY 25--A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF STOPPING THE MIDDLE EAST ARMS RACE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

3. WE SEE THIS LATEST SOVIET STATEMENT AS A CLEAR EFFORT TO COUNTER SOME OF THE EFFECTS OF RECENT SOVIET SETBACKS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND GET BACK INTO THE MIDDLE EAST ACTION. THE SOVIETS PROBABLY EXPECT SOME SYRIAN MOVE TO EXTRACT FURTHER ADVANTAGE FROM THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN THE UNDOF MANDATE RENEWAL PROCESS, AND MOSCOW HAS NOW STAKED OUT A COMPREHENSIVE POSITION WHICH STRONGLY RESTATES THE VIEW THAT ANY SUCH DELIBERATIONS SHOULD PROMOTE THE RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

4. THE PUBLICATION OF THE STATEMENT BEFORE THE SOVIET EMBASSY PRESENTED THE TEXT TO THE DEPARTMENT, APRIL 29, SUGGESTS THAT THE STATEMENT IS INTENDED PRIMARILY AS PUBLIC POSTURING. ITS PRESUMED PURPOSE IS TO FOCUS ATTENTION ON THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE IN ANTICIPATION OF THE PROBABLE UN DEBATE OVER RENEWAL OF THE UNDOF MANDATE. END SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

5. US ROLE. THE STATEMENT IS PARTICULARLY SHARP IN CRITICISM OF THE US MIDDLE EAST ROLE. IT CLAIMS THAT THE US IS ARMING ISRAEL WITH MODERN WEAPONS, INCLUDING ROCKETS "CAPABLE OF CARRYING CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR WARHEADS." IT TERMS THIS "ALARMING" IN VIEW OF REPORTS THAT ISRAEL MAY HAVE ITS OWN NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE STATEMENT ALSO CONDEMNS, IN NOW STANDARD TERMS, "SEPARATE DEALS" WHICH CREATE THE ILLUSION OF CALMING MIDDLE EAST TENSIONS BUT ACTUALLY "FURTHER AGGRAVATE" THEM. AT THE SAME TIME, THE STATEMENT CHARGES THAT IT IS THE US AND ISRAEL WHO ARE BLOCKING RESUMPTION OF THE MEPC, DESPITE US AGREEMENT THAT THE GENEVA FORUM COULD LEAD TO AGREEMENT ON ALL ASPECTS OF A SETTLEMENT.

6. GENEVA CONFERENCE. THE STATEMENT PROPOSES THAT THE MEPC TAKE PLACE IN TWO PHASES. THE FIRST PHASE, A "SHORT" ONE, WOULD RESOLVE "ORGANIZATIONAL" QUESTIONS. THE SECOND STAGE WOULD TAKE UP THE SUBSTANCE OF A SETTLEMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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THIS PROPOSAL APPEARS DESIGNED IN PART TO AMPLIFY EARLIER SOVIET REFERENCES CONCERNING THE NEED FOR "ADEQUATE PREPARATIONS" OF A RENEWED CONFERENCE. BUT IT MAY ALSO BE INTENDED TO HINT AT SOVIET FLEXIBILITY REGARDING THE US PROPOSAL, ORIGINALLY OPPOSED BY MOSCOW, FOR A PREPARATORY MEETING OF GENEVA PARTICIPANTS. MOSCOW, HOWEVER, CLEARLY INSISTS THAT ANY SUCH MEETING TAKE PLACE UNDER A FORMAL GENEVA UMBRELLA.

7. PLO REPRESENTATION. THE STATEMENT ASSERTS THAT "REPRESENTATIVES" OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION MUST PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF BOTH STAGES OF THE CONFERENCE. UNLIKE EARLIER PUBLIC STATEMENTS, HOWEVER, THE CURRENT FORMULA DOES NOT INSIST EITHER ON PLO PARTICIPATION FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CONFERENCE OR ON PLO REPRESENTATION ON AN EQUAL FOOTING. THIS SEEMS TO LEAVE OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE USSR COULD ACQUIESCE IN DELAYED PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE EARLY PREPARATORY STAGES OF A RENEWED MEPC AND MIGHT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT SOMETHING OTHER THAN AN INDEPENDENT PLO DELEGATION AS THE FORM FOR EVENTUAL PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION.

8. SETTLEMENT TERMS. THE STATEMENT REITERATES MOSCOW'S FAMILIAR TRIAD FORMULA ON THE ESSENTIALS FOR A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES FOR THE SECURITY AND INVIOABILITY OF THE FRONTIERS OF ALL MIDDLE EASTERN STATES. IT DOES NOT, HOWEVER, REFER TO A POSSIBLE FRENCH AND BRITISH ROLE AS GUARANTORS, AS BREZHNEV DID AT THE CPSU CONGRESS IN FEBRUARY. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE STATEMENT DOES AFFIRM THAT MOSCOW "ADVOCATES" A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF STOPPING THE MIDDLE EAST ARMS RACE, THUS ENUNCIATING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT STATEMENT BREZHNEV'S FEBRUARY 25 SUGGESTION THAT THE USSR WOULD BE WILLING TO SUPPORT ARMS LIMITATIONS AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. SISCO

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ORIGIN EUR-03

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66011

DRAFTED BY: EUR/SOV:JDGLASSMAN:AJ

APPROVED BY: EUR/SOV:RLBARRY

INR/RSE/SOV:JCOLLINS (PHONE)

S/S-O:DLMACK

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 104088

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 104088 ACTION SECRETARY 30 APR

QUOTE

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Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
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04 MAY 2006

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